



The City of San Diego

Staff Report

DATE ISSUED: March 10, 2021

TO: City Council

FROM: Mayor's Office

SUBJECT: Update on City's COVID-19 Efforts

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Council District(s): All

OVERVIEW:

This is an informational item intended to update the subcommittee on the City of San Diego's progress related to COVID-19 response. The report will include updates on the following aspects of the City's efforts:

- Training of SDFD paramedics and EMTs as vaccinators
- Vaccination of underserved populations
- Update on Housing Stability Assistance Program
- Vaccination of Operation Shelter to Home clients
- Planned relocation of Operation Shelter to Home clients from Convention Center
- Small business relief

PROPOSED ACTIONS:

None. This item is for information only.

DISCUSSION OF ITEM:

COVID-19 has affected the lives of all San Diegans and is the most impactful issue currently facing the City of San Diego. It is in the best interest of the citizens of San Diego that the City do everything possible to support the response to, and recovery from this global pandemic.

Since the County of San Diego bears primary responsibility for the public health, the City plays a supporting role to the County in most aspects of COVID-19 response, including vaccinations. In this supporting role, the City has taken the following actions:

- Trained over 220 members of its firefighter personnel to administer COVID-19 vaccines
- Administered over 47,000 doses of vaccine
- Entered into a Mutual Aid Agreement with the County for reimbursement of staff costs incurred in support of the City's vaccinating efforts
- Gained approval by the State to be a direct recipient of vaccines
- Procured and installed an Ultra Low Freezer with back-up power, as well as an additional refrigeration unit and monitors so that all current forms of vaccine can be properly stored.
- Provided staffing and resources for the vaccination superstation at Tailgate Park.
- Organized several independent vaccination events in the communities most impacted by COVID-19.

Housing Stability Assistance Program: On February 2, 2021, the City Council authorized acceptance and expenditure of approximately \$92 million in state allocated and direct federal Coronavirus Relief Funds, and \$5 million in CARES Act CDBG funds for the COVID-19 Housing Stability Assistance Program (HSAP) to provide emergency rental and utility assistance. As part of that same action, Council also authorized a Memorandum of Understanding with the San Diego Housing Commission for administration of the program and related expenditures.

HSAP will help pay rent and utility arrears for City households with low income (up to 80 percent of San Diego's Area Median Income [AMI]). In addition to rental assistance, HSAP will include assistance to pay for past-due, unpaid utilities, such as electricity, gas, water and sewer, trash removal and energy costs. In accordance with the funding requirements, HSAP will prioritize households that are below 50% of AMI or that have a household member who has been unemployed for 90 days or more. Rental arrears must be prioritized before utility arrears and partial payments for prospective rent.

The state's requirements under SB91 allow landlords to receive 80 percent of their tenants' arrears for the period of April 1, 2020, to March 31, 2021, if they agree to forgo the remaining 20 percent. If funding is available after prioritizing rental and utility arrears, they can also receive 25 percent of prospective rent for the months of April through June 2021. If a landlord declines to participate under these conditions, HSAP can provide direct payments to tenants of no more than 25 percent of the tenants' arrears and 25 percent of the three months of prospective rent. This threshold is set to qualify tenants for the minimum required payment under the state's residential eviction protections.

To be eligible for assistance through HSAP Program, households must meet the following criteria:

- Tenant has a City of San Diego address.
- Household income is at or below 80 percent of AMI, with priority for households at or below 50 percent of AMI. (The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development establishes the AMI levels each year; 80 percent of AMI is currently \$92,400 per year for a family of four.)
- Household has an obligation to pay rent.
- Household does not currently receive any rental subsidies.
- At least one member of the household has a reduction of income or other financial hardship due to COVID-19.
- Household experienced or is at risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability.

The Housing Commission will open an online application portal on March 15, 2021 on the Housing Commission's website for residents to apply for the program and submit required documents. The Housing Commission will also be contracting with community-based organizations to help with

community outreach and to assist households with their applications, especially those without internet access. The Housing Commission anticipates contracting with 211 San Diego to provide customer service and application assistance to households seeking information or assistance from the Housing Stability Assistance Program.

Operation Shelter to Home: On March 5, 2021, Mayor Gloria announced plans to safely relocate the residents of Operation Shelter to Home at the Convention Center to the City's reconfigured shelters, where they will continue receiving a high level of social services. All individuals currently sheltering in the Convention Center who have not already moved to permanent housing or longer-term housing options will be relocated to another location in the City's shelter system. Move-out is slated to begin the week of March 22.

The City worked closely with the County, the Housing Commission and service providers Alpha Project and Father Joe's Villages to reconfigure the City's homeless shelters to continue serving the maximum possible number of people per night while adhering to public-health guidelines for COVID-19 prevention and mitigation. The County will continue to provide ongoing health-related guidance at the shelters.

Approximately 600 people are being moved from the Convention Center to City shelters, including Golden Hall. Some people will also be transitioned to open beds at the Father Joe's Villages Paul Mirabile Center and PATH Connections interim shelter, which were reconfigured for greater physical distancing and COVID-19 prevention last year, as well as the recently opened Bishop Women's Shelter.

The following represents the reconfigured capacity and populations to be served in the City's shelters that were vacated last year:

Location	Operator	Population served	Beds (subject to change)
16th St. and Newton Ave.	Alpha Project	Single Adults	180
1710 Imperial Ave.	Alpha Project	Single Adults	106
Golden Hall, Upper Level	Father Joe's Villages	Families & Transition Age Youth	192 beds / 10 cribs
Golden Hall, Lower Level	Father Joe's Villages	Flexible Population Based on Need in the System	324

Shelter residents 65 years of age or older residing in the Convention Center who wanted to be vaccinated received their second doses of the COVID-19 vaccine on March 5th. All other residents who want to be vaccinated are scheduled to receive the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine on March 9 and 10.

Small Business Relief: The City has engaged in numerous efforts to assist small businesses affected by the pandemic.

- The City's webpage on small business resources is updated weekly with new and relevant resources that is distributed by email to our small business distribution lists. <https://www.sandiego.gov/economic-development>
- **Temporary Outdoor Business Operations (TOBO):** The Economic Development Department (EDD) is dedicating staff time to assist small businesses in complying with Temporary Outdoor Business Operations (TOBO) in partnership with the Development Services Department (DSD) and the Fire-Rescue Department. Additionally, a new program has been created to offer a grant intended to offset expenses they will likely incur. The grant provides businesses with \$3,000 - \$5000 to assist with constructing outdoor decks and platforms compliant with the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA). <https://www.sandiego.gov/economic-development/business/tobogrant>
- **CARES Act Revolving Loan Fund** provides economic assistance to businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The loans, which range from \$25,000-\$95,000, are intended to help entrepreneurs adapt their business models to operating under pandemic restrictions, to promote economic resiliency, and to support the retention or creation of jobs. <https://www.sandiego.gov/economic-development/business/financing/caresact>.
- **Brewery Industry:** The revised brewery industry webpage with updated map will be launched by April 1, to reflect current operations for this industry. <https://sandiego.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=636b0b7ee5204f76bea01f067be75e86>.
- **Startup Ecosystem:** The revised San Diego's Startup Industry webpage with updated map will be launched on March 15 to reflect current operators offering startup incubators, accelerators and coworking spaces. <https://sandiego.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Shortlist/index.html?appid=1e83625bf2ce43359e0be0c83cbc89c1>.
- **Buy Local Small Business Portal:** This website is currently under construction and is expected to be launched in April.

In the event of stimulus dollars coming to the City of San Diego as a result of the American Rescue Plan additional measures to assist small business will be considered.

Fiscal Considerations: N/A

Charter Section 225 Disclosure of Business Interests: N/A

Environmental Impact: N/A

Equal Opportunity Contracting Information (if applicable): N/A

Previous Council and/or Committee Actions: N/A

Key Stakeholders and Community Outreach Efforts:

Paola Avila

Chief of Staff